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SIXPENCE

THE BRIGHT BOY of Whitehall, Mr. Hore-Belisha, is continuing to display his powers of producing bright ideas for the good of the service over whose destinies he presides. He has now formulated a scheme for conferring "full status" on the Territorial Army and has received the blessing of the House of Commons on his latest experiment. His reforms will also undoubtedly please the force of citizen-soldiers who have had some reason in the past for deplored the reluctance of authority to give them either the notice or encouragement their patriotic zeal deserved. No longer is the title of Brigadier to be withheld from the commanders of Territorial infantry brigades and divisional artillery, and in future there is to be no limitation, as there has been hitherto, on the appointment of Territorial Officers to such commands. Further to give these Officers the necessary qualifications for these higher posts facilities are to be afforded them for special training. Adjutants and N.C.O.'s of Territorial units are to have the same pay as their opposite numbers in Regular Units and finally the finance and the interior economy of the Territorial Army are to be subjected to a thorough business report by experts. This report, it is to be hoped, will result in the greater simplification of office work by keeping down to more reasonable limits both the number of forms to be filled up and the letters to be written.

STALINISM, ONE KNOWS from the news that leaks out from Russia, is exceedingly industrious in discovering its enemies in all parts of the Union of Soviets, both in Europe and Asia. But its long arm of vengeance also stretches beyond the limits of Soviet rule, and at intervals we hear of mysterious disappearances of personages who have incurred the dislike of the dictator in the Kremlin. The friends of the exiled Trotsky are specially marked down for attention by Moscow, which apparently credits this *quondam* comrade of Lenin and Stalin with almost miraculous powers of disturbing the peace of the Stalinite dovecots. To Stalin and his supporters so-called loyalist Spain has long been but an appanage of the U.S.S.R., and it is therefore not surprising to learn that the hunt for Trotskyists has been going on merrily in this part of the world for some time past. The Russian G.P.U. has so firmly established itself in Barcelona that it is able to act with perfect freedom, taking no notice either of the Spanish police or the Government authority. "Marxist," writing to the *Manchester Guardian*, explains what has been happening. "A number of persons," he writes, "have vanished. They have not fallen in battle and have not been killed by bombs. They have simply vanished and have never been heard of again. It is very significant that they are all alleged 'Trotskyists.' These

kidnapping (or whatever they are) have been most frequent in Barcelona." He then proceeds to give the names of some of the "vanished" proletarians who, despite all their great services to "loyalist" Spain, have suffered from the wrath of Moscow. It is a sad tale he unfolds, but what else could one expect with this part of Spain wholly under the domination of Soviet Russia?

AGRICULTURE IN BRITAIN had long experienced the lot of the neglected child when the Great War came to emphasise its value and importance. And after the war was over and the threat of starvation through the U-boat cutting off food supplies was removed, agriculture was probably only saved from slipping back into its old position of neglect by the advent of yet another world catastrophe, the Great Depression, which threw so many millions suddenly out of work. So the land came to be looked to as an outlet for employing the otherwise unemployable. As a factor, too, in the new economic nationalism, which became the post-war gospel of a distracted world, agriculture began to be highly rated, in this country as elsewhere. Thus it is that agriculture in Britain has been receiving of late years an attention which would have both pained and astonished the pre-war generations brought up to regard free trade doctrine as Heaven-sent wisdom and support to home products as the counsel of the Evil One. Yet even to-day agriculture suffers from one grievous handicap: it is a dry topic and the efforts of its supporters, in the way of propaganda, usually result in making it, for the general public at any rate, drier still. This must necessarily militate against the carrying out of much badly needed reform.

ONE LITTLE NON-PARTY Agricultural Association, which for years past has been conducting an active campaign for the revival of British agriculture and which has undoubtedly succeeded in getting its voice heard in influential circles, has pointed the way how agricultural propaganda can and should be made more effective. This is the Rural Reconstruction Association, which has its headquarters at Le Play House, 35, Gordon-square, W.C.1, and which is tireless in bombarding the Press with letters and in issuing brightly written booklets and pamphlets, setting out lucidly and emphatically what it means by the expression "revival of agriculture." We have one of those pamphlets before us at the moment, proclaiming the objects of the Association and its desire to extend its sphere of influence, at present only limited by the amount of the funds at its disposal. In view of what this Association has already accomplished with its relatively small annual income from its members' subscriptions, it would

seem well worthy of generous support both from the agricultural interests it so zealously serves and from that portion of the general public that appreciates the part agriculture ought to play in any sound scheme of national defence.

IT IS GOOD TO THINK that Horace's memory can still inspire a Horatian Society and that even the silly artificial pronunciation of Latin imposed on our schools has not made classical quotation quite obsolete. The national affection for the most polished of poets is shown by the Anglicising of his name, and Mr. Duff Cooper was certain of a sympathetic audience when he defended his memory against all charges. It would be a fascinating experience to offer Horace to-day a glass of Lafite 1864 poured from an Impériale which almost rivals the amphora in size. Wine keeps best and matures more surely in the largest vessel, and to-day most of the pre-phylloxera vintages, 1870 excepted, have lost their glory within the narrow prison of a bottle. The Romans played games with their wines, which would shock any respectable grower of Bordeaux or Burgundy, but at least they did confine those they proposed to keep within the nobly spacious limits of an amphora which would contain some six gallons or three dozen quart bottles. Probably the poet would find the greatest Claret of our time rather lacking in body, though perhaps his taste might appreciate the perfect balance of its golden "mediocritas." Perhaps we should have been disappointed if we had tasted the Massic of Horace's birth year, which he opened in honour of Corvinus some thirty-five or forty years after the vintage.

UNDER THE PATRONAGE of the Queen, a performance of *Milestones* was given at Sadlers Wells by the Toc H Drama League. This play, while a pleasant reminder to the older generation, is somewhat bewildering to the younger folk, who ask with genuine surprise: "Did people ever really behave like that?" Unfortunately they did, but the modern actress finds it difficult to believe, and in consequence rarely catches the atmosphere of those old days. This was apparent in the cast on Monday, though Alec Ferguson was a brilliant exception, his transition from youth to age being clever and convincing, his Victorian outlook and self-satisfaction being admirably portrayed.

MRS. HUMBERT WOLFE'S light and witty verse, the beauty of the setting and brilliantly finished acting by Miss Diana Wynyard give a rare distinction to the new play at St. James's Theatre, *The Silent Knight*. It is an adaptation from the Hungarian original of Eugene Heltai. The story is a slight and fanciful one, but its inherent weaknesses are largely hidden by the manner of its presentation. The cast, notably Mr. Lyn Harding, Miss Margaretta Scott and Messrs. Anthony Quayle and Ralph Richardson, make the most of the opportunities that come their way, inspired by Miss Wynyard's lively interpretation of a by no means easy part.

AT THE ARTS THEATRE CLUB, *Flying Blind*, by Pamela Kellino and James Mason, of which two performances were given, is amusing nonsense. Except for the parts of Elsa Potts and the nurse, which are redundant and should be cut out, the writing is terse and often witty. Nicholas Phipps and Sylvia Coleridge, on whom most depended, lifted the play up whenever it showed signs of sagging, and the rest of the cast was adequate as a background to these two.

THE DEATH OF Sir Seymour Tritton, of Rendel, Palmer & Tritton, chartered civil and consulting engineers, recalls a chapter of the War, which emphasises the cruel law that no army can learn anything from the experience of its allies, but only from its own bitter experience. Sir Seymour played an important part in designing and supervising the light railways used by our armies at the front. At Verdun the French discovered that light railways were a vital military weapon. The load they could carry put petrol lorries to shame, and a judicious ordering of their rails made it far more difficult for the enemy's artillery to cut their service than to make a road impassable. General Gouraud, who tore up the tram rails of Châlons to serve his Decauville service and who boasted ten miles of light railway to every mile of front line trenches, established a marvellous system of light railway communications in the rear of the Fourth Army in Champagne, and this organisation proved its worth in the final check of the German advance in 1918. In September, 1915, even before Verdun, he urged the value of light railways on the British military authorities, but even after Verdun all that the French had learnt at such a cruel cost was ignored, and in the Somme battle there were practically no light railways behind our lines.

NONE WILL BE ABLE to say that they have spent an amusing hour and a half at the Gaumont, where the new gangster picture, *Dead End*, is being shown; but it will have been a vital one. Mr. Sidney Kingsley, upon whose play the film is based, shows us the cradle of the potential gangster—a squalid cul-de-sac on the waterfront in New York where, overlooked by the apartments of the rich, the urchins live in squalor and fight to exist. From this environment spring such as Baby-face Martin who, in a sentimental moment, returns to renew his acquaintance with his mother and his old sweetheart. His reception makes the moment short-lived, and he ends his life in the alley where he began it, riddled with the bullets from the revolver of a former playmate. The picture is stark in its reality, and damning in its message, which is delivered without hyperbole. It lacks the finer points of, let us say, *Winterset*; but both its acting and its presentation lift it well out of the rut. Humphrey Bogart, as the inhuman, imperturbable gangster, Joel McCrea, as the man who rises above his environment, and Sylvia Sidney, as the girl who fights to keep her young brother from falling into the morass, are all excellent; but it is the gang of urchins who take the acting honours.

Leading Articles

LES CAGOULARDS

"CONSPIRING is the biggest fun in the world." Augustin Filon, a Frenchman of the old school, the brilliant tutor of the Prince Imperial who sacrificed everything to the lost cause of the Bonapartes, is responsible for this remark. It expresses a French definition of sport which it is hard for an Englishman to understand, though the idea of the secret society has a perennial and ubiquitous attraction. In our own country there is nothing that serious money-making gentlemen of middle age love better than to dress themselves up in strange regalia, and indulge in the mysteries of password and countersign as though their convivial activities were concerned with secret plots of terrible import. Here, since for nearly 200 years a revolution has been a matter for Utopia or Erewhon, these frantic secracies do not shroud lurid plots against the security of the State, but throw a pleasant veil of mystery over charitable endeavours and cheerful companionship. The Latin takes his secret society in deadly earnest. It is true that in Spain the Church has prevailed and that even now the underground organisations which play their part on the Red side are of foreign rather than national origin. In Italy, secret societies have always been directed against the existing order, and the criminal organisations of the Camorra and the Maffia flourished under a screen of ritual and high-sounding vocables, until Fascism suppressed them. Both in France and Italy, the masonic institutions have been a screen for political wire-pulling and shameless log-rolling, and the name of the Grand Orient remains as a terrible warning.

Yet the game of the secret society is one that human nature cannot resist. The more heavily it is suppressed, the more certainly will it flourish. In France the Republic has always been as terrified of clubs and associations as any dictator. The Revolution was made and developed by clubs that were to a great extent secret societies, and to this day the French authorities look with suspicion and distaste on any association of persons for the promotion of any particular object. It is true that a few clubs exist in Paris, not unlike those that flourish in London, but such an assemblage as exists in the neighbourhood of Pall Mall would be unthinkable in Paris. The Frenchman would ask at once why all this gathering together for nominal social purposes, when every decent citizen has a café to sit and talk in and a home in which to take his rest and amusement. Gambling is the only rational excuse for a club, but gambling is the monopoly of the State and private gambling against the law. Political clubs can only be intended to exercise undue influence on the powers that be—or it may be to exterminate them—and short would be the shrift of such respectable institutions as the Carlton, the National Liberal, the Reform, *et hoc genus omne*.

Yet no one has outgrown the childish joy of make-believe. No one, however old, is immune

from the secret virus which breaks humanity into groups united by ridiculous passwords and ceremonies with purposes more or less rationally defined and understood. Since a Frenchman cannot have a drink and talk politics in something equivalent to an English political club, he is driven underground to form associations which to begin with revel in criticism of those in power and which are unconsciously carried on from words to action. For the greater part of this century the Action Française has had a glorious time talking fiercely and mildly rioting. In Charles Maurras it has the support of a great brain. Again and again he has proved the absurdity of the present régime and nobody can controvert his logic. Yet, with it all, there has been no apparent achievement. Still no one really takes the Royalist cause seriously—not even Maurras himself. Perhaps it was a little unfortunate that the Action Française could never see eye to eye with its future King, though so far the disagreement cannot be said to have had any serious effect. No one will take tragically the Duc de Guise's disavowal of the only organisation which in the darkest days still shouted "Vive le roi" and broke a few policemen's heads to prove their loyalty. The Pretender has "decided to recover the throne of my fathers." Good luck to him! but he has a long furrow to plough.

The collection of weapons is an integral part of plotting, and the discovery of these weapons by the police, as far as possible in the most unlikely places, is part of the game. The Press and the Government are never so happy as when they can make the nation's flesh creep. Ku Klux Klan has a fine sound to it and promises thrills and shudders to the readers of Sherlock Holmes, but the Cagoulards, the Hooded Ones, is an even more promising name, and every bourgeois to-day is picking up his morning paper with a pleasurable premonition that there will be something to make his blood run cold. That same bourgeois on the first Labour Day stocked his Paris flat with provisions and stabled a cow in his courtyard, so frightened he was at the prospect of a Revolutionary outbreak, and died uncomplaining and unafraid in the Verdun trenches when all seemed lost. The Cagoulards provide a film for his entertainment. The detective ingenuities of the police in unearthing stocks of arms will meet with his amused approval, until his cynical mind remembers that no one finds so well as he who hides. So far there has been no sign of any of these desperados using the weapons they have been at so much pains to collect and conceal.

Whether they derive funds and inspiration from the Extreme Right or from the Extreme Left is a matter of purely academic interest, for it is their fate to produce a violent and short-lived explosion. Frenchmen will not tolerate foreigners interfering in their home affairs and politics, and a hint of German or Russian gold and propaganda would deal the death-blow to any secret society. They do not object to conspiracies as such. It is just as well that those in power should be kept awake by efforts to maintain their position. If, however, the plots are the work not of Frenchmen but of the enemies of France, then the case will come to the final Court of Appeal.

Fundamentally the Third Republic is the work of Napoleon Bonaparte and its backbone is the Army, which is the Nation. There is one thing in which all true Frenchmen are agreed—that they will brook no foreign meddling in their internal affairs—and if necessary this determination would be enforced by the nation in arms.

THE ATTITUDE OF MIND

SOME days ago, in one of the poorer districts of London, there was a shocking gas explosion in a house, and after a room had been wrecked a woman who was one of its occupants found herself, with her husband, struggling bewildered among the ruins. It was reported that she turned at once to her husband and said, "They've bombed us. There's a war on."

Now this little plain tale from the streets illustrates precisely the crisis through which civilisation is passing. A large number of people, whom we believe to be right, are not particularly alarmed. They do not believe that any nation or even any government wants war, because the cost of even a successful gamble in war would be so devastating and because the chances of a successful gamble, for any of the nations which show any disposition towards war, are so very slender.

It is impossible to wage any but the most brief campaigns without great resources in money and supplies. These are lacking to the more aggressive nations. It has been proved that economic and social recovery after war, even for the completely victorious, is desperately slow and painful. It is certain that the individuals, the cannon fodder, the civilian victims of air raid and bombardment, in any single nation are utterly averse to war. It is, moreover, improbable in the highest degree that a war once started in our modern world would be short and decisive. On the contrary, every example and experience by which we can form any judgment must lead us to the opposite conclusion. There is so little to gain and so much to lose for every nation, government and individual concerned, that the idea of war is at once labelled as a symptom of certifiable mania.

Yet even those who exercise a critical judgment and, in doing so, persuade themselves that war will not be made, have a continual anxiety. It would indeed be impossible to take an intelligent interest in the affairs of the world, or even to glance casually at the headlines in each morning's newspaper without being anxious and worried. Madness is not uncommon in the world around us and it is within everyone's experience to have known cases in which the balance of the mind was disturbed without the fact becoming manifest to other people until the damage was done. It is also evident that we are living in a vicious circle. Aggression flourishes so long as it can count on the reluctance of its victims to make the only effective resistance, which is war. Bluff always succeeds until it is called, and in purely civil affairs one has to be prepared to take the possible, if remote, consequences in calling another's bluff. So this game which is being played, of playing

with fire, may conceivably land us all where not one of us wishes to be, just as it lands the philanderer in divorce and the slightly crooked in jail.

It is not then surprising that the attitude of mind exemplified in the case of the gas explosion should be almost universal. Yet this attitude of mind is dangerous and fatalistic, and dangerous because it is fatalistic. If we live the whole of our lives ready to believe that any sudden noise is the sound of an enemy act, and go to bed each night with the half-formed expectation of being flung out of it by the bomb of an air-raider, we have already gone a long way towards producing the very consequence which we dread.

This, then, is the psychological problem of the moment—to change the attitude of mind. The more practical problem is how to make an end of the game of bluff without being forced to call it by force of arms. A conviction among the more aggressive spirits that both the arms and the will to use them were available would do the trick. But the continued success of bluff and aggression makes this conviction more and more difficult. So perhaps the starting point should be a deliberate attempt to change the attitude of mind. And as the attitude of mind is, in essence, a form of cowardice, the attempt should not be hopeless.

THE PROBLEM OF GERMANY

IT seems clear that time must elapse before any judgment can be passed on the results of Lord Halifax's visit to Berlin. The system of the hot and cold douche is a favourite diplomatic manœuvre and that nation is wisest which discounts equally optimism and pessimism. At least we may hope that the interview between Herr Hitler and Lord Halifax was not overshadowed with the memory of what followed Mr. Haldane's visit to Berlin. The German Press expressed horror at the thought that the conversations could be concerned with so vulgar a thing as bargaining, yet no one has ever made a suggestion of securing European peace without a certain amount of give and take on all sides. The upshot of the matter seems to be—is the present Germany really more devoted to peace than its pre-war counterpart? It is hard to believe it in the face of the glorification of war which finds expression in paeans in honour of the hand grenade and converts a whole country into an armed camp. No doubt the Führer would prefer to obtain all he wants without war, but the question arises—is what he wants compatible with European peace and our own existence?

This country can have no objection to a powerful Germany, provided that its might does not upset the balance and inevitably lead to a desperate struggle. On the face of it we have no immediate interests in Austria and Czechoslovakia. It would be impossible to raise any popular enthusiasm for a war on their behalf. Yet all the States of Europe are so closely bound together that it is impossible for us to shut our eyes to their possible fate. There was a time when Germany could argue that her

predominance in the Near East was necessary to peace as a counterpart to Russia, but the Russian bogey has been exploded. The Soviet Empire is vast, and full of potential wealth, and no sane foreigner would dream of attacking it. Outside its borders it has proved itself to have no more than a nuisance value. Stalin is far too busy killing off his former friends to be a military menace outside his frontiers and the Red Army has been of little avail to the Chinese in their resistance to Japan. Soviet propaganda is beginning to lose its terrors, since it brings with it the violent reaction of Fascism. The time has undoubtedly come when Western Europe should cut itself adrift from entanglements with the Bolsheviks who can exercise no influence in this sphere except by underhand means. France would have everything to gain by denouncing her pact with the Soviet.

Doubtless satisfaction could be given to Germany in many points without disturbing the peace, but would that satisfaction suffice to content and not rather wake fresh appetites?

"AUF WIEDERSEHEN"

IN these days people have become travel-minded, and those who formerly would have spent a fortnight's holiday on the Norfolk Broads or the Sussex Coast now prefer to explore the Continent. This is, I feel, just as it should be, for owing to the geographical situation of our island and our naturally conservative natures we see but little of foreigners in the ordinary way and are, therefore, inclined to regard them—whatever nationality they may be—as Yahoos.

Where are we to go, though, in order to enjoy ourselves in comfort and security? In Spain, the efforts of Russian Communists, after ruining the manners and morals of a proud and noble people, have turned a lovely country into a land of terror which we may not visit until General Franco has achieved victory. In France, similar Left Wing efforts resulting in innumerable strikes make one feel inclined to cut the Republic off one's visiting list for the moment. It is a far cry to Italy, Austria or the Scandinavian countries. Thus it would seem that foreign travel has become difficult for those of us whose pockets are not well lined—but there is a solution; we can go to Germany.

Recently it so happened I had a week or two to spare and found to my delight that for the sum of three pounds five shillings I could buy a return ticket to Koblenz. I left Victoria at eleven o'clock at night and, after a comfortable journey via Belgium, arrived at my destination by one o'clock the next day.

Koblenz is a delightful town, situated at the junction of the Moselle and the Rhine. The whole place has an air of gaiety; the gardens on the banks of the river are charming; the people are notable for their courtesy and make a point of looking after their guests. You can take a lodging for the night almost anywhere and find yourself in clean and comfortable surroundings, for in essentials the cheap and humble inn is as good as

the large hotel. Thanks to the registered mark, living for the foreigner is cheap to a degree.

Life in the streets I found vivid and attractive. There were many soldiers in uniform, but their attitude and bearing was as unlike the old idea—unfortunately old ideas die hard—of the swaggering German bully as could well be imagined. The Germans undoubtedly are proud to be soldiers, and civilians honour them as men serving their country, a spirit we could imitate with advantage in England, where there is still too much of—"Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' Tommy fall be'ind."

Boys, and even men, wore shorts—often the famous *leder hosen*—little jackets embroidered in green, and a hat with a feather. The women also favoured green as the colour for their dresses, and one felt it was a pleasure to be in a country where men looked like men and women looked like women. Both sexes obviously believed that cleanliness is next to godliness, and their dress and appearance even when labouring in the fields showed that work need not necessarily be associated with dirt.

Since the surrounding country is well worth exploring it is possible to stay with pleasure in Koblenz for a considerable period. Few people, however, will for long resist the call of Father Rhine, or refrain from embarking on one of the little steamers that move up and down the great river. These steamers are attractive to a degree, for they are invariably crowded with holiday-makers who have, as one soon realises, learned the simple secrets of happiness; learned that a laughing yarn with a friend, a glass of wine, a dance and a song are pleasures for ever denied to cinema fans and the habitués of smart restaurants.

I was exceedingly interested by the German attitude to the Great War. In England we have tried to forget it; in Germany, though they do not want to fight again, they remember it very clearly. Proud of their own war record, old soldiers are knightly enough to regard former enemies without resentment—indeed, with positive affection. I happened to fall into conversation with an ex-officer, who had, so we discovered, fought opposite me at Guillemont farm in the battle of the Somme. He was delighted; pressed glass after glass of wine on me, and was most anxious I should go and stay with him in Köln, an invitation which lack of time alone prevented me from accepting. This was not a solitary instance, for three other ex-soldiers treated me with the kindness and consideration one usually meets with only from old friends, because I had once been their enemy.

The Rhine Valley casts a spell over one's heart and mind, partly, perhaps, because it is a national holiday-ground run in a manner deserving of the greatest admiration. All along the Middle Rhine I saw neither an advertisement nor a petrol pump, those two devices of the devil which have done so much to ruin "England's green and pleasant land." Every inch of ground suitable for cultivation has been utilised, even on the steepest hillside, and the people with untiring industry have created terraced vineyards in the most incredible situations.

Near Rudesheim the narrow Rhine Valley broadens out into the wealthy district of the Rheingau, where the rarest wines come from. I arrived there during the annual wine festival, and found like thousands of others how perilous the cobbles in the steep, old narrow streets can be at two o'clock in the morning.

Since people come from all over Germany to the Rhine, it is perhaps the best part of the country to meet "assorted" Germans. One is certain to make friends, certain when one leaves them that it is only "Auf Wiedersehen" and not good-bye, for sooner or later one will be drawn irresistibly back to :

"... The wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters proudly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees."

F. H. MELLOR.

SHEPHERD

NESTLING at the foot of the grassy hills is the farmhouse with its jumble of barns and out-buildings. Scattered here and there over the broad acres are the cottages of the labourers, the men who milk and plough and sow. Above the farm, right on the knees of the hill is one small cottage by itself. Here dwells old Job Ekins, the shepherd, but very seldom will you find him at home, for nearly the whole of his time is spent with his beloved sheep.

Wherever his flock is grazing you may find him leaning on his crook with his dog at his heels. He is an old man now, but he is still as upright as a beech. His skin is tanned to the colour of a hazel nut and contrasts strangely with the snowy whiteness of his beard. His eyes are of that faded blue which is so often found in those who spend their lives in the open air and they are surrounded by a mesh of fine wrinkles through gazing long and intently into the distance.

Unless you are a friend of his you will find him courteous but taciturn. He will bid you a polite "Good morning" and, if necessary, direct you on your way, but you will feel that he regards you as an interloper on his hills. If, on the other hand, he knows you he is willing enough to talk, and a mine of information he is. Not only can he discourse for hours about his sheep, but he is a veritable mine of all country lore. He knows the birds, the beasts and the flowers. He is something of a doctor, too, and can tell you what herbs to use to cure your ills. But always does he return to the beasts among which his life has been spent, the sheep. For they are to him like children.

"I did start work," he told me once, "when I were a liddle buoy o' zeven year owd. Crow scaring 't were, an' I were out in the fields from dawn ter dusk. Bitter cowd it were an' all I'd 'ave fer me dinner 'ud be a bit of cowd, raw turmut. Zixpence a wikk varmer did gie me an' I rackon I earned it. Then I were taken off thuck an' put to odd jobs round the varm, but when I were vowerteen I were sent to 'elp shepherd an' I bin with sheep ever since. Purty nigh zixty year that be an' every one on 'em's bin a good 'un. 'Tis 'ard, cruel 'ard at times, specially lambings, but

work never killed nobody. 'Tis a good job, for they be sich 'elpless things they must 'ave someone what knaws 'em."

As old Job says, it is a hard life. Exposed to all the weathers, the shepherd must tend his flock no matter if it snow or sleet. In the late summer it is very pleasant on the high hills, but at other times old Job and his dog are out in the fiercest storms. But the old man never complains. He loves his work.

As he said, lambing is the hardest time. His little cottage does not see him for days at a time. He has a curious hut on wheels in which he lives with the sheep. Wherever the flock moves Job's little hut goes with them. And night and day the old man moves gently about the complaining ewes.

It is a night in early spring. There is a sharp tang of frost in the air. A sickle moon swims amidst a sea of stars. It is very late, but high up on the hill a light is moving like some erratic firefly. Job is tending to the early lambs.

He moves silently between the pens, watching and sometimes helping with fingers which are strangely deft and gentle despite their calloused thickness. At his heels his dog pads like a shadow, his brown eyes fixed upon his master. The man stops and bends over a panting ewe, and a little later a feeble cry tells that yet another lamb has been born. The shepherd moves on.

One ewe has given birth to triplets. She cannot nurse the three, but Job is wise in his craft. Another ewe has a lamb which is dead. He takes the living and the dead to his hut and with his big clasp-knife he skins the little dead body. Skilfully he binds the pelt upon the living, squalling youngster and bears him to the childless mother. He lays the mite beside and watches to see whether his ruse has been successful. The ewe turns her head and sniffs at the tiny thing. She catches her own odour from the pelt, again she sniffs, and then she makes room for the lamb to snuggle up to her. Old Job chuckles as he turns away. Another lamb has been saved.

For weeks it goes on, by day and night, without a stop. Sleeping only by snatches and then with an ear cocked for a sound of distress, the old shepherd lives among his folds. But with the passing of the days he reaps his reward, for the lambs grow strong and frolicsome and, as he says, "Tes worth it all to think that I 'elped 'em on the road."

Shearing, too, brings its rush of work. The sheep are driven down to the farm, and with half-a-dozen helpers Job shears them of their fleeces. Though the others use the mechanical shearer, Old Job insists on doing it in the old way—by hand. It is astonishing to see the way he grasps a struggling sheep and up-ends it. Then his shears begin to snick and almost before you realise it the fleece is peeled off like an overcoat. He is not so fast as the machine, but he is infinitely more fascinating to watch.

If, walking on the high hills, you come on an old white-bearded man leaning on a shepherd's crook, give him greeting with suitable deference, for he is not an ignorant rustic. He is a master of his craft, a man whose life has been spent in the service of the beast he tends.

DAN RUSSELL.

Books of The Day

MR. CLYNES' MEMOIRS

A REVIEW has already appeared in these columns of the first volume of Mr. J. R. Clynes' memoirs. The second volume has now been published ("Memoirs, 1924-1937," Hutchinson, illustrated, 12s. 6d.). It brings the record right up to the present year, but naturally the main interest lies in Mr. Clynes' account of Labour's rise to power, its achievements in office, and its internal dissensions. When the first Labour Government was formed Mr. Clynes as Lord Privy Seal and Deputy Leader had a heavy burden of work to carry on his shoulders. As he expresses it, he was working himself steadily 15 hours a day while zealously striving to have the eight-hour day shortened for certain other workers. His memoirs help to throw an interesting light from the Labour angle on certain important incidents and controversies of the past, the Campbell case and the Zinovieff letter among others. Mr. Clynes, of course, has his own strong convictions and incidentally he reveals a robust faith in the Labour cause and its ultimate triumph. But he is by no means a fanatic, and he is always studiously fair to political opponents even when he feels them to be pursuing hopelessly wrong policies. As he has been writing his memoirs it would seem that quiet reflection on the incidents of the past has produced an increasing judiciousness of outlook and comment. Even on Ramsay MacDonald his criticisms are less severe than one might have expected. He cannot, of course, excuse what he naturally regards as Ramsay MacDonald's betrayal of his Party in the formation of a National Government. But his comments on that statesman are even more restrained than they were in his first volume.

Office taught Mr. Clynes and his friends many things, and the knowledge acquired resulted inevitably in changes in their general outlook. Whatever as a good Socialist may have been his opinions before regarding the generosity of Ministerial salaries, experience as the member of a Labour Government soon convinced him that "£5,000 a year, reduced nowadays by income-tax to about £3,500, is not enough for a Minister forced to live in Downing-street," and to those who would suggest more economical standards of living for the King's Ministers he is not slow to point out that it would be difficult to conduct "successful diplomacy with Britain's distinguished visitors in a kitchen-living-room, while feeding them on sausage and mash." Mr. Clynes, too, learnt to appreciate the loyal help always given to Ministers, irrespective of their politics, by members of the Civil Service. "They were," he writes, "always beside me, advising, coaching and checking; and in a short time I gained a measure of knowledge necessary in matters where, perhaps, national safety or the spending of millions of money was concerned."

On the subject of war and defence Mr. Clynes' practical commonsense and his Labour pacifism

have ever been in conflict, as was shown by his attitude on the outbreak of the Great War and is indicated again in the rather muddled reasoning in the second volume of his memoirs, where one finds him at one moment lamenting that our old ally Italy has been "antagonised almost to the point of conflict," and then later on declaring that all attempts to put a stop to the Abyssinian war were "emasculated chiefly by Britain's timidity," and where, too, he can express the view that "another war, such as will surely come if armaments are not soon reduced, would be an indelible disgrace to the statesmen of England" and yet go on to say:—"We who worked hard for disarmament and for the substitution of the League for the sword are driven to the possession of defence weapons because of the increasing risks of attack by Fascist States. . . The blunders and barbarities of a few great leaders have led us to the point where lack of the means to resist may invite a crushing blow. That peril is too great to go unheeded." If one cannot help noticing these glaring inconsistencies in argument, they also serve to illustrate the honesty of a politician who forces himself to admit facts that do not wholly square with his own party's political creeds and propaganda.

AN UNAPPRECIATED QUEEN

Catherine of Braganza is one of the Queens of England about whom the average English historian has little to say, being usually content to record the facts that included in her dowry was the not unimportant item of the port of Bombay and that Charles II thought so little of that port's

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

**Modern Attacks on the Sanctity of
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by
DOROTHY DUDLEY SHORT

Mrs. Dudley Short renders a service to the community in stating clearly and most forcibly to-day's problem. Is life to be treated as sacred? Whether in ignorance or from other motives it is being attacked. All speakers will welcome a pamphlet from which they can draw cogent arguments and leave them in the hands of the thoughtful.

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value that he was prepared to lease it to the East India Company for the paltry sum of £10. As spouse of the highly susceptible Merry Monarch, Catherine's position was obviously far from easy, and, though she was by no means devoid of good looks, her swarthiness of complexion probably militated against her popularity with the English people, many of whom were also inclined to be suspicious of the influence this Roman Catholic Princess of Portugal might exert in affairs of state. After Charles' death and the abdication of James II, matters for her became extremely difficult and embarrassing owing to financial troubles and the not overkind treatment she was accorded at the hands of William and Mary. It was not till 1692 that she managed to get out of England and return to Portugal. It might have been expected after her experiences in England that she would be anything but friendly to the country from which at the end she had been so anxious to escape. But when, owing to her brother's illness, she was installed as Regent of Portugal she showed herself to be an extremely enthusiastic ally of this country, forgetting even her pro-Stuart sympathies in her resolute prosecution of the War of the Spanish Succession on the side of England.

This part of Catherine's life has never received the attention which Miss Janet Mackay rightly pays to it in her ably written and illuminating biography ("Catherine of Braganza," John Long illustrated, 16s.)—a book that contains evidence both of much careful research and of a well-balanced judgment in dealing with the material collected. The Queen is revealed to us as a woman

whose love for and loyalty to her Royal husband never wavered, however much she was wounded in heart by his many infidelities. If Charles could never give her the love she wanted, he at least conceived a warm affection for her and stood loyally by her when she became involved in considerable danger arising out of the "Popish Plot." No one who reads Catherine of Braganza's story as set out in detail and most entertainingly by Miss Mackay, with all its contrasts of life in England and Portugal, can fail to be impressed with its claims to human and historical interest.

DR. SVEN HEDIN ON GERMANY

Dr. Sven Hedin during the Great War spent a considerable time with German troops and made no secret of his pro-German sympathies. Those sympathies he has never lost, as is clear from the book which he has written primarily for the Swedish public, but also seemingly intended for the world at large. This book in its English translation is entitled "Germany and World Peace" (Hutchinson, illustrated, 15s.). It is the result of a two year visit to Nazi Germany. In this visit Dr. Hedin surveyed the whole Nazi scene and found it surprisingly good. He cannot, it is true, approve of the Nazi prosecutions of the German Jews; they were far too indiscriminate, he holds, and took no account of what some of these Jews had done for the benefit of their Fatherland. At the same time, while proud to proclaim that one-sixteenth of his own blood is Jewish, he is prepared to accept the Nazi point of view that Jews were largely responsible for the moral disintegration of Germany in the immediate post-war years. For the rest, he is full of admiration for the manner in which the regeneration of Germany has been brought about under the Hitler régime. The zeal and ardour he has found displayed in every department of Nazi activity leave him disturbed in mind as to what may happen if this new Germany, overflowing with energy and enthusiasm, is to suffer further frustration through the cramping clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, and so he passes to a very earnest plea for acceptance of Germany's colonial demands. His object is, he says, to prevent another world war which appears to him to be threatened by the attitude of Powers who refuse to recognise the new Germany's urgent needs. Dr. Hedin's propagandising past may perhaps not be without its prejudicial effect on some of his readers, and to others who are quite ready to accept the sincerity of his motives his arguments for colonial concession may appear a trifle weak, especially as the picture he paints of the new Germany is a little too rosy-coloured to be quite credible. But with these reservations his book is well worth reading at the present time as a sympathetic (one might almost say Nazi-inspired) interpretation of Nazi ideals and viewpoints.

THE A. P. HERBERT WAY

Wit and humour are the special gifts of Mr. A. P. Herbert, and there is plenty of both to be found in his two recent books—"Sip! Swallow" (Methuen, 5s.), wherein one can read of all manner of things from a cure for hiccups, which furnishes

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the title, to hats and Gulf Streams; and "The Ayes Have It" (Methuen, 6s.), where Mr. Herbert tells the full story of his success as a politician, first in getting elected for Oxford University in a last-minute candidature and then in inducing Parliament to pass his Marriage Bill. This second book makes peculiarly delightful reading and, incidentally, for all Mr. Herbert's modest endeavours to share out the credit for the passing of this private member's Bill with his various supporters, exhibits him in a new light as a resolute and dashing Parliamentary Crusader. It is a tale of exciting action and adventure, of dire pitfalls evaded and grave obstacles overcome, affording proof, if proof were needed, that Oxford is not always associated with "lost causes." To the uninitiated, too, it may reveal and explain some of the many curiosities of Parliamentary procedure. Luck, Mr. Herbert cheerfully admits, helped the Bill's progress, but skilful handling of it also obviously saved it from the rocks that threatened its passage. Mr. Herbert does not pretend that the measure, which has now become an Act and will be in force in January next, is in any sense perfect. It does not do, he says, all that he could wish. "But," he contends, "it does as much as could be expected to-day by those who understand the matter and far more than I expected twelve months ago." Probably the most exciting incident in this Parliamentary story—for the hero, at any rate—was the "Maiden Speech" in which the coming of the Bill was announced. Even now, Mr. Herbert tells us, he almost blushes to recall it, and perhaps Mr. Churchill aptly described it. "Call that a Maiden Speech?" was his remark to Mr. Herbert in the Lobby. "It was a brazen hussy of a speech. It was the most painted harlot of a speech that ever presented itself before a modest Parliament."

RURAL ESSEX

What Hardy is to Dorsetshire, Mr. S. L. Bensusan is to Essex, said the late R. B. Cunningham Graham in the last essay that came from his pen. There was much truth in this dictum, for no one has explained the rustic mind of Essex to the "furriner" so ably and entertainingly as Mr. Bensusan. If anyone wishes to be convinced on that point let him read Mr. Bensusan's latest collection of East Anglian sketches, "Marshland Echoes" (Routledge, illustrations by Betty Aylmer, 10s. 6d.). Here he will find stories gay and tragic, something of the old England that still lingers in the countryside, suspicion of the "furriner," low cunning and crafty ways and superstition and, as a contrast to the less amiable characteristics of rural humanity, the simple faith that clings stubbornly to its old creeds. Nothing could be more pathetic than the story of Job Dutt, member of a sect known as the Peculiar People, who, because he had a stronger belief in prayer than in doctors, found himself in the dock charged with the manslaughter of the son he dearly loved; nothing more amusing than the manner in which Martha Wospottle, with her wondrous "words o' power," manages to get back money that was stolen and "scoops the pool" by taking toll from both the thief and his victim. If the redoubtable Martha's "yarbs o' healing" did

not always do the work expected of them, why there was the obvious explanation that "nobody can agin Natur and there are times when them stars and planits are too much for any lone woman." And nobody after reading her latest exploits could deny that she certainly had a magical, if very canny, way with her.

THE INCREDIBLE ADVENTURER

Mr. Bernard Shaw, in acknowledging the debt he owed to a book of R. B. Cunningham Graham's on a Moroccan adventure when writing his own play "Captain Brassbound's Conversion," remarked that "I have not made him the hero of my play, because so incredible a personage must have destroyed its likelihood—such as it is." Cunningham Graham was in very sooth "an incredible personage" to this modern prosaic world. He didn't fit into any of the recognised niches. At Harrow he did not conform with the ordinary standards of public school life, and in early manhood he soon discovered that the 19th century middle-class civilisation of England was extremely distasteful to him. The blood of *hidalgos* and of Scottish kings flowing in his veins demanded something more unusual and exciting. So he departed to South America and tasted the delights of high adventure in the Argentine and Texas, narrowly escaping with his life in encounters with desperados. Then he returned to England; stood for Parliament, became an extreme Leftist and got imprisoned for his pains. Disgusted with politics he took to authorship, sang the praises of the South America that appealed so strongly to his fervid imagination and generally won for his brilliant literary gifts the commendation of the world of letters. His love for South America was to take him back to it both in search of remounts during the war and later at the age of over eighty when he died there. Mr. A. F. Tschiffely who has written a biography of this remarkable vivid personality has chosen for his title the name by which Cunningham Graham was known to his intimates and which was so eminently suited to him—"Don Roberto" (Heinemann, illustrated, 15s.). In this book he confesses that he has been largely indebted to the writings of Don Roberto himself, who, when asking him to undertake the task of biographer, said to him: "After all, practically everything I have written is really autobiographical." Mr. Tschiffely has made excellent use of his materials in portraying a man who combined, as he justly says, "the romanticism of a Byron and the idealism of a Don Quixote."

NEW NOVELS

Our knowledge of the First Dynasty in Egypt may be somewhat scanty, but we need not regret that fact with Miss Joan Grant's airy fancy picturing for us a Golden Age of wisdom and paternal rule in The Two Lands as an obvious contrast not only with the barbaric Sumer contemporaneous with it, but also with the less perfect world we know to-day. Her "Winged Pharaoh" (Barker) is a novel that fully deserves that somewhat overworked epithet, charming. It is the story, written in the first person singular, of the

girl Sekhet-a-ra, also called Sekeeta, daughter of a Pharaoh and herself destined to rule over Zam as "Winged Pharaoh" (Priest-Sovereign) with her brother Neyah. The skill with which all the characters of the Royal House are made real to us the while Sekhet-a-ra tells her own story so unself-consciously and yet withal so revealingly is as remarkable as the natural manner in which this ancient Utopia, with its wise and noble maxims of private and public conduct, is presented to us for our edification, no less than for our enjoyment. It is a fine literary achievement.

"Towers With Ivy," by Minnie Hite Moody (Murray) is an American domestic chronicle of succeeding generations covering a century in time. It deals mainly with a single family connected with the founding of a "college" in a small town. That gives unity to the weaving of the pattern of the years, and it must be said for the author that for all the changes in characters in her long story she never loses the interest of her reader. He or she may lament that Fortune does not smile a little more on some members of the family, but will go on reading, impressed with the graceful ease with which the narrative flows on from one generation to another.

Mr. Philip Lindsay tells a fascinating tale of fourteenth century England and the old Cinque Ports' "Pirates of the King" in "The Bells of Rye" (Ivor Nicholson & Watson). It is the story of a beautiful lady who required to be "tamed" and of a rough but valiant man of the sea who tried the taming, and there is some exciting fighting in it when the Frenchmen suddenly raid and sack the

proud town. Mr. Lindsay knows his history and can make it live.

An amusing mixture of satire and farce is offered by Mr. Edward Greenwood in the tale of "Old Goat" (Heinemann)—a man with a grievance against the world, who finds himself suddenly elevated to an Earldom, with possibilities of trying all sorts of mad and "goatlike" experiments on the village lying within his domain. Mr. Greenwood gives the "old goat" plenty of rope for capering about and the result is well calculated to delight his readers.

PUBLISHERS' PLANS

The Oxford University Press are holding over till after Christmas Mr. R. Glynn Grylls' "Mary Shelley." This book is based on much material that has become available since Mrs. Marshall's standard biography of Shelley's wife appeared nearly fifty years ago.

Another book that is being held back and will not appear till the New Year is "Himalayan Assault," the story of the French Himalayan expedition of 1936.

Coming from the Golden Cockerel Press shortly will be "A Compendium of the East: Being an Account of Voyages to the Grand Indies." This is a translation of the hitherto unpublished journals of Jean de Lacombe, a Frenchman who in the seventeenth century joined the newly formed Dutch East India Company's service.

Methuen will be issuing on December 2 "Under the Pole Star," by A. R. Glen, assisted by A. C. Croft. This is the story of the Oxford University Arctic Expedition of 1935-36. The book has 22 maps and is illustrated by 48 plates.

Emil Ludwig's latest biography is "Cleopatra," the English translation of which will be published by Allen & Unwin on December 2.

For November 24 the Cambridge University Press announce a new volume for The English Place-Name Society. The title of this volume is "The Place-Names of the East Riding of Yorkshire and York." It is edited by Mr. A. H. Smith. On November 30 the same publishers will bring out "The Negritos of Malaya," by Mr. I. H. N. Evans, the well-known authority on the ethnology and archaeology of the Malay Peninsula.

OTHER NEW BOOKS

"My Scottish Youth," by R. H. Bruce Lockhart (Putnam, 10s. 6d.); "Augustus: The Golden Age of Rome," by G. P. Baker (Grayson, 12s. 6d.); "Over the Hills and Far Away," by Ada Galsworthy (Robert Hale, 10s. 6d.); "The Changing American Newspaper," by Herbert Brucker (Milford, 7s. 6d.); "Pope Pius XI and World Peace," by Lord Clonmore (Robert Hale, 12s. 6d.); "George du Maurier and Others," by C. G. Hoyer Millar (Cassell, 10s. 6d.); "Soviet Tempo," by Violet Conolly (Sheed & Ward, 7s. 6d.).

FICTION.—"A Tale from Bali," by Vicki Baum (Bles, 8s. 6d.); "The Pasquier Chronicles," by Georges Duhamel (Dent, 10s. 6d.).

A new murder book by **WARNER ALLEN**

Times Literary Supplement: "The name of the author will at once tell the reader what to expect—in short, a book full of wit, rich in incidents and ingenious in design.

"Mr. Warner Allen has chosen for his background the home and political life of Roger d'Arblay, bitter opponent of the French premier, Allard. Public and private intrigues lead to a series of tragedies.

"A brilliant chapter on the trial of Madame d'Arblay for the murder of Allard deserves special mention as a model for those who should ever attempt the dangerous feat of balancing on a rope stretched between accurate observation and planned exaggeration, without falling into the net of caricature."

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Round the Empire

LIVELY CONGRESS DEBATES

THE Indian mail papers contain full accounts of the exceedingly lively discussions that took place during the All-India Congress Committee's annual conference at Calcutta. In these proceedings the Left or Socialist Wing in the Congress demonstrated its strength when urging "direct action" for breaking down the constitution in the provinces and calling Congress Ministries—the Madras Cabinet in particular—to account for not repealing the repressive laws and liberating all political prisoners. Though they did not succeed in carrying the resolution and amendments they had framed, the support they received caused many anxious moments to the Congress executive.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru initiated the proceedings by giving a lengthy review of political developments since the last meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. He pointed out that he was originally opposed to office acceptance, but confessed that after watching the working of the Congress Governments in the several provinces he had formed the conclusion that it had strengthened the position of the Congress a good deal. He explained in detail the reasons which had led the Working Committee to decide that only the first two stanzas of the *Bande Mataram* song should be sung at Congress meetings, and said that this did not mean any slight to Bengal's sentiments. The latter stanzas were excluded because it was felt that they contained sentiments and ideology to which exception could rightly be taken by other communities. The central idea was to have a song which had an all-India appeal and was acceptable to all the communities constituting the Indian nation. After the President's review, resolutions were taken up, the most important of which related to Federation.

It was on this Federation resolution that the Socialists first made their presence felt. They attempted unsuccessfully to amend it by inserting in it a reference to the necessity of "direct action." Their amendment was rejected, but the voting showed the growing strength of the Socialist element in the Congress. The resolution which was accepted read as follows:—

"In view of the announcements made on behalf of the British Government that steps will be taken to inaugurate the proposed Federation, the All-India Congress Committee reiterate their emphatic condemnation of and complete opposition to the scheme and their decision to combat it in every possible way open to them. An attempt to inaugurate this scheme, despite the clearly expressed will of the nation, will be a challenge to the people of India. The Committee therefore call upon the Provincial and local Congress Committees and the people generally, as well as the Provincial Governments and Ministers, to prevent the imposition of this Federation, which will do grave injury to India and tighten the hands which hold her in subjection to imperialist domination and reaction. The Committee are of opinion that

Provincial Governments should also move their legislatures to give formal expression to this opposition to the proposed Federation and to intimate to the British Government not to impose it on their provinces."

On the second day of the Session the Socialists put forward a resolution strongly criticising the Congress Ministries. This resolution, among other things, called upon the Congress Cabinets "to implement the Congress election manifesto by the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners and to take immediate steps for the repeal of repressive laws." The mover, in the course of his speech, said that the apprehensions previously entertained that Congress Ministries would gradually, by accepting office, become identified with British imperialism and the methods of government connoted by it had been justified by the actions of the various Congress Ministries. The seconder proceeded to assert that the Madras Cabinet in particular had given the "go-by" to the Congress election manifesto.

Intervening, the President (Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru), while conceding the right of the members of the All-India Congress Committee to criticise the action of Congress Ministries, pointed out certain difficulties that stood in the way of dealing with such questions. He suggested that the proper place to discuss such questions was smaller committees. Moreover, as regards the actions of the Madras Ministry, he suggested that it would be unfair to sit in judgment on them without hearing the explanation of the principal individual concerned, namely, Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar, who had been prevented from coming to Calcutta owing to illness. His personal opinion was that the meeting should confine itself to considering broad principles and giving directions to the Congress Ministries based on those broad principles. As regards the question of prosecutions for sedition, he urged that they could not preclude the possibility of Congress Ministries taking action in kindred matters, such, for instance, as when violence was involved.

Pandit Govinda Ballabh Pant, Premier, United Provinces, speaking in a conciliatory vein, acknowledged that the All-India Congress Committee had every right to sit in judgment and to examine the actions of the Congress Ministers. They, the Congress Ministers, were after all the creatures of the Congress. They were there to carry out the behest of the Working Committee, who had every right to direct and guide them. Pandit Pant described the actions his Government had taken to implement the Congress election manifesto, but said that they had not succeeded in doing all that they should have done or all that they would have liked to do. He asked the conference to remember that they were new to the art of administration and were thus liable to err. But all that he could say was that it would be the earnest endeavour of the Congress Ministers to carry out the wishes of the members of the All-India Congress Committee and fulfil their expectations.

An amendment to the Socialist motion, referring the matter to the Working Committee, was then put to the vote and carried.

FORTIFYING DARWIN

A committee sitting in Canberra has decided that Darwin must be replanned and fortified. At the moment, according to the *Sydney Bulletin*, "it is a tin-can sort of town, with a wharf which bends in the middle and streets full of Chinese. Its garrison numbers about 150. Its aerodrome equipment would fetch a high price in the antique market. If a foreign foe invaded Darwin, and the garrison had to retire, the train would be requisitioned if it didn't happen to be a few hundred miles south. Mrs. Aeneas Gunn called it a 'friendly, bushwhacking old train.' Even in its giddy youth it was not built for speed, nor was the railway on which it runs built to carry heavy loads. Darwin is not a defence post at present. It is merely a deathtrap for the garrison, which could not fight a force bigger than a light cruiser's landing-party.

"However, cruiser docks and forts are to be built, guns mounted, the aerodrome reorganised and the garrison increased. The job is to cost about £400,000. A couple of million—they spent that on the civil aerodrome alone at Singapore—would not be too much to give Australia a decent naval base in the north. Australian plans for northern defence compare ill with those of the Dutch East Indies, which can be reached from the Australian coastline in two hours. The Dutch East Indies Navy is to be made stronger than the present Australian Navy. Increase of the air force to 200 aeroplanes will give the Dutch more than we have, and they are raising nearly four times as many civilian troops as Australia possesses. This last move shows what the Dutch think of the urgency of the international situation. Hitherto it has always been their policy to train and arm only a bare necessary minimum of their coloured overseas subjects. And the Dutch have far less to lose than Australia."

SOUTH AFRICAN PROTECTORATES

Speaking at the Free State United Party's Congress at Bloemfontein recently on a resolution to the effect that "the time had arrived for the three Protectorates to be incorporated in the Union," General Hertzog said: "I have received a letter written on behalf of the British Government which bears out what I said on my arrival in South Africa upon my return from Europe, namely, that I had the fullest confidence that the British Government, when it came seriously to consider this question of the transfer of the territories to the Union, would feel that our request for such transfer is one which is in every way due to be effected. To the letter which I have received I have already sent a reply. I have the fullest confidence that the British Government, having given due consideration to the claims of the Union, is prepared to consider this question further. I am quite convinced that it will not be long before the undertaking of the British Government made in 1910, that these territories would be transferred to the Union whenever the Parliament of the Union was to take a resolution on these lines, will be given effect to. I am glad that it is not the intention of the Congress to say anything more

on this question, for I would be the last to desire that anything should be done which might embarrass the British Government in this matter. I feel quite sure that the British Government is earnestly endeavouring to put itself in a position to be able to give effect to the undertaking of 1910."

UNION DEFENCE

Speaking at a military gathering at Theunissen Mr. Pirow, South African Minister of Defence, stated that nowhere was the prestige of South Africa's military past better realised and appreciated than overseas. Although modern warfare demanded drastic changes in the commandos, their mobility could still be made use of. It was proposed to develop and train commandos to fight in the bushveld. South Africa, said Mr. Pirow, need have little fear of an attack from the coast. The probability of attack would come from the North, and the bushveld would be the scene of fighting. Bush battalions would be formed, whose mobility and independence of roads would be invaluable. These strong, disciplined units would form the core of commandos and would do reconnaissance. The first bush manoeuvres would take place in June next, when all commandos would have to send units for training. Practical methods of bush-fighting would have to be evolved, and it might be found necessary to equip commandos with machine-guns and train young men to use them.

"In January next a further conference will be held to discuss ways and means of improving the commando system," said Mr. Pirow. "The chances of war are very remote, especially as South Africa will only be called upon to protect herself and her interests." Eventually the numerical strength of the commandos would be 150,000, consisting of a large percentage of the best of South Africa's population.

THE CANADIAN WEST

So much has been said and written on Western Canadian affairs by visitors from this country that observations from a man on the spot are perhaps all the more welcome. Take, for example, Mr. J. M. Davidson, managing secretary of the Industrial Development Board of Manitoba. In a recent interview he said that in spite of the drought in Saskatchewan the Prairie Provinces as a whole have had a good harvest, and the crops have been selling at considerably higher prices than in preceding years. Summarising the conditions, he said that the total value of agricultural production in the Prairie Provinces from all sources was over £15,000,000 higher than last year. Manitoba had its largest crop this year for the last sixteen years, wheat, oats and barley alone accounting for well nigh £16,800,000, compared with £8,761,200 in 1936 and an average of £5,568,400 for the years 1931 to 1935. The mineral output of Manitoba was increasing and was expected to reach £3,200,000 this year, or practically double the 1935 output. Alberta's oil output was treble that of the average output in 1936. Actually 10,000 barrels of crude oil were being won per day. Since 1933 there had been a steady increase in manufacturing in the Prairies.

SALMON RIVERS

The Fraser River in British Columbia has of late years lost some of its prestige as a salmon river, and there are those who now contend that the Restigouche River and its tributaries in New Brunswick provide the best salmon fishing in the world. It is certainly true that the Provincial Government receives an annual rental of more than £20,000 for angling rights on sections still vested in the Crown, although many of the best pools are owned outright by clubs and individuals. The values of these annual rights tend to rise steadily. Thus a certain United States purchaser paid £4,000 for river rights twenty years ago. Since that time this particular property has sold twice for £12,000 and latterly again for £25,000. Most of the Government water is leased every ten years at a unique auction held in a Legislative Building at Fredericton, the sale being attended by members of the Government, potential purchasers and lawyers, and here old angling rivals bid against one another for the choice pools with some of the same vigour as they claim the sizes of their catches.

Some idea of the richness of the river may be gathered from the fact that the Restigouche Salmon Club, one of the largest and oldest on the river, took during a recent year nearly 2,000 salmon and 502 grilse from this particular stretch. No fewer than 204 of the salmon weighed more than 25 lbs.

RHODESIA'S NATIVE POLICY

The session of the Southern Rhodesian Parliament, now completed, has been perhaps the most

important since the Colony obtained self-government. Three Bills have been passed which are steps towards the Differential Development policy of Mr. G. M. Huggins, Prime Minister and Minister of Native Affairs. The greatest problem in Africa south of the equator is the future economic, social and political relations between European and Bantu. Broadly speaking, Mr. Huggins' policy is partial segregation in separate areas in which the interests of whites and blacks, respectively, shall be predominant. To achieve this the native must gradually be taught the art of self-government, so that he may keep pace with his increasing economic and social ambitions.

The recently passed Native Councils Bill establishes limited local self-government by the natives in such native areas as desire it, and the Native Law and Courts Bill returns to the Chiefs power to try civil cases between native and native in areas under their control. The Industrial Conciliation Bill allows the Government to insist that, in European Municipalities, natives employed in certain skilled work shall be paid the same wages as Europeans. This is likely to protect white artisans from the competition of cheap and partially skilled natives in these "white Islands."

The problem Mr. Huggins and his Government have set out to solve is the provision of fields in which the advanced native can find congenial employment without undermining the European standard of living. The three Bills lately before the Rhodesian Parliament mark a real advance towards this exceedingly difficult goal.

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Letters to the Editor

OUR FOREIGN POLICY

Sir,—There must be many of your readers who are in complete sympathy with the views expressed by Colonel Rocke in your last issue regarding our attitude and policy to Italy.

Italy did not get what is called a square deal from her Allies at the end of the Great War, and it was unfortunate, to say the least of it, that Mr. Eden should have indulged in his silly jibe against Italy for not being prepared to make "concessions" herself out of her war gains. As your leader writer justly remarked: "Those who make a jibe at the expense of others should make sure they are not living in a house of glass. There are still many people alive who remember the efforts that were made to bring Italy into the war on our side and the promises that were made and broken. If memory serves, there was a Treaty of London of which the conditions were never fulfilled. If there had been a Mussolini at the head of Italy when the day of settlement came, it is likely that the Allies would not have been so lightly shot of the undertakings they had given when their backs were against the wall."

What strikes one as very strange is the rather amazing inability of the present conductors of our foreign policy to carry out any definite policy. They seem to be ever hivering and wavering. At one moment we are invited to contemplate really earnest endeavours to bring about the old friend-

ship with Italy. Then Mr. Eden intervenes with his fatuous jibes, Italy is cold-shouldered and Lord Halifax is off on a mission of reconciliation with Germany. The next step we may anticipate is a friendly approach to M. Stalin! And then we shall be precisely where we were before—isolated from all the Powers but France and misunderstood by every statesman in Europe. A little less zeal for splashing about aimlessly in the troubled waters of diplomacy and a little more thinking out of an intelligible foreign policy would seem to be clearly indicated. But can we expect this from our irresponsible enthusiastic Edens?

Cromwell-road, S.W. J. H. S. HENDERSON.

SHAKESPEARE

Sir,—I was much entertained by your comments on Mr. Shaw's efforts to improve upon Shakespeare. Everyone must recognise "G.B.S.'s" remarkable literary abilities. No one has denied his possession of wit or his ability even to write passably good blank verse. His audacity, too, keeps the world constantly amused. But, as you say, there are limits to what even the English public can stand from this gay and brilliant jester.

He has shown what he can do in improving Shakespeare's "Cymbeline." And let him be content with that. Further experiments in "Shakespeare" are not likely to enhance his fame either with his contemporaries or with Posterity.

Putney. S. T. WILLIAMS.

ABUSE OF THE TELEPHONE

Sir,—Some three months ago I announced through "the usual channels of information" that one of my daughters was engaged to be married. Since then hardly a day has passed, certainly never a week, without a telephone call from some entire stranger asking for myself or my wife by name, which proved on inquiry to come from some firm of photographers, furniture dealers, florists, hotels and I regret to add occasionally newspapers, offering to do business with us in view of the forthcoming event. Each of these calls is a tiresome interruption and a considerable waste of our time. Many of your readers must have suffered the same nuisance and inconvenience. Can nothing be done? Obviously to cease to be on the telephone is not practical, and even to have one's name left out of the telephone book gives a lot of trouble to one's friends. What we do is to inform the interrupter that we have a black list of all firms who employ this method of canvassing, and that we do no business with firms on the black list. If this practice were generally followed, I think the abuse would quickly be abated.

PATER FILIARUM.

STORM COCK

Sir,—I have read with interest your article entitled "Storm Cock." I heard its shrill note frequently during last summer. The Missel-thrush is sometimes called the holm-thrush because of its propensity to perch on the top branches of the oak tree. A holm is the old name for the oak. I confess that I do not like the notes of the Missel-thrush.

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MACMILLAN

Your Investments

SHARES FOR CAPITAL AND INCOME

IT is only natural that when Stock Markets are in the throes of depression the ordinary investor should stand aside and await more cheerful news before undertaking further commitments. He is not as a rule in a position to know exactly why security prices are on the decline, and he waits until they show definite signs of recovery before he will buy. In doing so, of course, he is bound to miss his most favourable opportunity, for the investor who merely follows market tendencies is bound to run the risk of taking in stocks or shares at top prices and thus provide the professionals with a chance of unloading their holdings.

The investor, then, should trust his own judgment or that of his adviser, be it banker or Stock Exchange broker, and ignore "mob psychology" if he wishes to invest his money to the best long-term advantage. Recent depression has been due less to pressure of sales than to complete absence of buyers. But deceased estates and other accounts are always bringing stock on to the market, and, when buyers are missing, then the snowball of declining prices is set in motion and those who speculate beyond their means are forced to sell out to cover their bank loans. That is their misfortune and few can feel sympathy with them, but the genuine investor who can afford to pay for a moderate amount of stock should take advantage of present prices to do so.

GILT-EDGED

One cannot feel enthusiastic about British Government and other gilt-edged stocks at present prices, for they depend entirely upon artificial maintenance of "cheap money." This is, it is true, an integral part of the Government's financial policy, but we have seen such "planning" overcome before by natural forces, and indeed this is largely the cause of the setback in the U.S.A., where no amount of "cheap money" could offset destruction of confidence by an excess of official interference with industry and trade. Trustees are hard put to it at the present time to secure 3½ per cent. on their money, and this notwithstanding the fact that tax has then to be deducted at 5s. in the £. They will probably welcome the new Commonwealth of Australia 3½ per cent. loan with definite redemption dates 1951-54 as giving them an opportunity for securing a reasonably short-term investment.

HOME RAILS

Home Railway prior charge stocks offer far more attractive yields, for the prospect of continued worries as to wages troubles prevents this market from enjoying normal favour. Thus Trustees can purchase G.W.R. and Southern Railway 5 per cent. preference stocks to give income of around 4½ per cent., and the risk of having to make an exchange later on at a loss does not appear to be great. Non-Trustees can obtain £4 18s. per cent.

from L.M.S. 4 per cent. first preference and 5½ per cent. from the 4 p.c. 1923 preference stock. These are attractive returns when it is remembered that L.M.S. ordinary are expected to pay 2 per cent. for the year. At 29, the ordinary stock would then yield well over 6½ per cent.

UNION CASTLE

Final stages of the unravelling of the unhappy Royal Mail Steam Packet Company tangle are reached with the distribution of Union Castle shares to holders of R.M. and E.D. Realisation shares. It is sad that holders of what appeared to be perfectly sound Shipping securities should have had to stand aside and watch speculation by outsiders, but, with violent changes in Shipping values in the past few years, it was inevitable. Market opinion differs considerably on the question of a true valuation for the R.M. and E.D. Realisation shares, but as they are to receive 13 Union Castle shares for every ten Realisation shares held, in addition to 5s. cash per share, a valuation is given to Union Castle shares of rather less than 26s. per share including such value as may be attached to surplus assets of the Realisation companies on their liquidation. Actually dealings in Union-Castle are expected to commence around 22s. 6d. per share, so that surplus assets are only given a valuation of 3s. 6d. per share. This makes the Realisation shares look cheap at the present price of 38s. 6d.

INDUSTRIAL YIELDS ARE HIGH

The flow of good industrial company results continues. Increased dividends in almost every class of industry have been followed by declines in the shares even of the foremost companies. It is not out of place to repeat that the investor should take the chance of securing such shares as Imperial Chemical, Imperial Tobacco, and Courtaulds, to yield over 4½ per cent., while technical Stock Exchange weakness has depressed the prices of such stocks to below their intrinsic value. One also fancies Associated Portland Cement and British Portland Cement, the leading combines in the trade, which at under 85s. give over 5 per cent. to the investor. Building plans for October caused disappointment in the market, but the total approved was practically at the same level as a year ago, and the type of work now being undertaken involves even more concrete work than private house-building. The leading cement shares therefore appear cheap. It may be added that almost any share in the Iron, Coal and Steel list will give a yield approaching 6 per cent. and every prospect of capital appreciation to the investor who has the courage of his convictions!

TIN SHARES

The fall in Tin to about £180 per ton must prove a serious matter to the producers, especially if the quota is cut to 85 per cent. next year. Many of the companies will find it difficult to maintain dividends next year. But the fall in the shares has been almost too severe and especially so in the case of the good-class shares. Pahang at 19s. give every prospect of an 8 per cent. yield, even allowing for the setback in tin.

JOIN The Navy League NOW

The Navy League is the only Organisation whose object is to urge the vital importance of Sea Power to the British Empire. All patriotic citizens should therefore give it their moral and financial support.

For information as to enrolling as a member of the League, please communicate with the General Secretary, The Navy League, Grand Buildings, Trafalgar-square, London, W.C.2.

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